CHAPTER - V

ETHNO GRAPHIC PARALLELS
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According to Andreas Lommel, "it is impossible to draw a hard and first line between the vanished primitive cultures of the past and those which still survive in different geographical locations in the world, for those of the present are the heirs of the former. For a proper understanding of the primitive cultures and their art, it is necessary to understand the whole range of cultures, from the most primeval ones".

The history of art enables us to identify and track down elements of cultural continuity in the form of artistic motifs, which are culture transmits to another and established the links that connect primitive people of any period both with their contemporary neighbours as well as with their predecessors. These interconnections, both in time and space show diffusion of motifs across the globe, and show unexpected links, not only between places separated by vast stretches of ocean but also between peoples and cultures separated in time by the lapse of many centuries or even of millennia.

It has to be borne in mind that the rock art is the work of hunter-gatherer and has to be understood in the cultural matrix of a hunting-gathering community.

Talking on the relationship and importance of prehistoric and primitive art Luis Pericot –Garcia, et al. (1969 : 7) held the view "Nothing is so revealing of the mentality of our Pleistocene forefathers as their contribution to humanity's first art. We are gratified to discover that they were able to create a enjoy works in which, for the first time, man went beyond the wearisome daily task of obtaining his subsistence and produced marvelous idealized images of the animals that accompanied him in his comings and goings, and even images of himself ... Art places us in contact with the mind and spirit of the prehistoric peoples, enables us to penetrate into their souls, and helps us to compare their life with that of existing primitive peoples whose art we can study directly."

Prehistoric art is clearly and undoubtedly distinct from primitive art. Prehistoric art is distant in time and is a resume of the first stages of universal art, while primitive art is the art of the contemporary communities living in
primitivism with a subsistence economy of hunting gathering and daily wage earning.

Explaining the significance of the animals in cave art the authors \( (Ibid: \ 30) \) write "primitive peoples of today give us an idea of what the early artists may have been. For today's primitives the representation of figures by means of painting or engraving is a means of practicing magic, particularly the magic of the hunt. Certain rites are more efficacious of performed before the image of the animal to be hunted. These rites are performed by priests or sorcerers, secretly or in holy places, sometimes in mysterious recesses in the depths of caves. All these bespeak a society based on totemism, with its totem animals whose death must be propitiated. Breuil interpreted it as an expression of sympathetic magic and to quote him, "that the game should be plentiful, that it should in case and that sufficient should be killed were the chief aim". \( ^2 \)

In this context Leroi Gourhan\( ^3 \) aptly remarked "In the life of a society models of weapons change very often, models of tools less often, and social institutions vary seldom, while religious institutions continue unchanged for millennia. In India the Hindus today in their daily worship recite the same hymns composed and recited by the Rig Vedic Aryans 4000 years before.

Taking on the prehistoric cave paintings Max Raphael \( ^4 \) wrote "to us, complicated men of the twentieth century, geometric sings on the one hand and naturalistically painted animals on the other may appear as expressions of two separate worlds that we can connect only by considering the first degenerated forms of the second. In the eyes of the Paleolithic man, however they were certainly two aspect of one and the same world, in which half-nomadic communities of hunters stood in close physical relations to the animals through their wooden and stone weapons, and in distant mental relation, through their magic-totemistic ideology". This is possible only if we regard the object not as a mere pretext for imitation but as a device for the realization of formal ideas, which are rooted not in nature, but in human needs, the human spirit and the existing means of production like the Striyantra of Hinduism.
Ethnographic record of the Native Americans reveal that as far as they can travel along the chain of memory the Native Americans lived in a world with spirits. According to their traditional thinking there is nothing that does not have a spirit. Everything from the common stick to the stone has a spiritual essence that must be reverenced as a manifestation of the all-pervading mysterious power that fills the universe. Human beings are no more important than any other thing, whether alive or in-animated. Each of them possesses special powers and medicines, which can be harnessed by humans who understand and respect them. For example a mother might symbolically sew a hawk's wing on the clothing of the baby to give him speed, a fox tail to impart cunning, or a sea bird's skin for luck in fishing, or a squirrel's foot to make him good climber and so on as believed by Native Americans. Thus what appears quaint and mundane to a non-Native eye may have enormous spiritual significance to the Natives. Similar believes do exist both in tribal as well as developed Hindu societies in India.  

An attempt is made here to show how ethnographic information on the production of art obtained from primitive tribal societies can be used in the interpretation of archaeological assemblages of rock art; an endeavour to apply the Middle Range Theory linking human behaviour with the archaeological record. The use and abuse of ethnographic analogy has been an area of debate between archaeologists and anthropologists. The ethnographic interpretation of rock art initiated by Tylor (1973), Spencer and Gillen (1899), Breuil (1952), Binford (1967), Morwood (1975) was seriously objected by Laming (1959) and Leroi Gourhan (1968) who held the view that Paleolithic art should be interpreted in its archaeological context in its "own language, and not in the accents of nineteenth century..." (Leroi-Gourhan 1965). Clegg (1985) and Frankel (1995) also held identical view by saying that the notion of continuity of tradition from past to present in Aboriginal society is more apparent than real – as viewed through our "ethnographic spectacles"; and emphasised on interpreting rock art with archaeological data only. They consider rock art as a vast reservoir of database of the past human behaviour and are therefore form a part of the wider scientific discipline of archaeology.
Notwithstanding the role of archaeology in interpreting rock art certain patterns and motifs including some figurative representations remain beyond recall and convincing explanation. It is a human instinct to question what does a pattern or motif mean? In the absence of a satisfactory explanation we are prone to attribute ritualistic and enigmatic significance. In such a handicap situation ethnographic analogy may be applied as one of the many possibilities for generating ideas for the explanation of rock art. In the words of Morwood (1992) \textsuperscript{15} "in the study of prehistoric art, ethnographic case studies which document the functional relationship between art, ideology, social organisation, resource use, and the transforming processes by which the material evidence for these relationships is incorporated into the archaeological record, have obvious utility". Such information can be used as a source of ideas for explaining structural paltering in prehistoric art system. Tacon (1992) \textsuperscript{16} discussing on the validity of ethnographic interpretations holds the view,

"Analogy adds an ethnographic perspective to prehistoric data and provides models that may be appropriate for the understanding of archaeological data. Analogies should not be drawn at random, however. They should be carefully considered and, whenever possible, based on a culture or cultures historically related to the prehistoric people under study. This direct historical approach is the most straightforward form of analogical deduction and assumes the observed practice is a development, with an unknown but limited degree of change, from observed earlier data.

"When a group of people has not surviving counterparts, analogies should be based on cultures that exploit similar environments in similar ways. In other words, the culture under study and the culture from which analogies are drawn should inhabit similar ecological environments and be at a similar subsistence level. This "parallel" analogy cannot be used to focus on specific but is useful in interpreting processes or modes of operation of classes of data. Analogies can even be drawn from diverse cultures if the class of data examined relates to ecological and subsistence variables in a known manner."
Wherever possible, analogies should not be used on their own. Their most useful use is for the suggestion of hypothesis that can be accepted or rejected by other means."

Analogies should not be confused with factual data. Since human behaviour, by and large is more resistant to change, analogies should be carefully drawn for interpretation. Religion and iconographic representations of religious beliefs are particularly resistant. Discussing about the change in human behaviour Nicholson (1976)\textsuperscript{17} and Schapiro (1953)\textsuperscript{18}, hold the view that, only under very strong pressure fundamental beliefs and symbolic meanings change over the centuries. This is especially true of religious iconography and art associated with ideology. However, such pressure (such as acculturation) can be detected in the archaeological and historical records and can be taken into account accordingly. To quote Tacon "In fact, analogy use in the interpretation of prehistoric art and religion can be one of the most illuminating investigative tools available, but it should always be combined with other approaches".

One of the most controversial formulations of rock art interpretation is the neuropsychological model propounded by Lewis-Williams and Dowson (1988)\textsuperscript{19} in 1988. The model owes its origin to the ethnography of the southern San (Bushmen) in Africa, according to which it is the Shamans who executed the paintings and engravings as experienced during an altered state of consciousness. The model states that the human neuropsychological system generates a range of luminous percepts that are independent of light from an external source. These visual phenomena generally take geometric forms such as grids, zigzags, dots, and spirals and are experienced as incandescent, shimmering, moving, rotating, and sometimes enlarging patterns that grade in to one another and combine in bewildering arrays. Lewis-Williams and Dowson (1988)\textsuperscript{20} further expanded the model to three stages that appear to be common in the progression of mental imagery during altered state of consciousness. The first stage is the perception of simple geometric shapes, which they termed \textit{entopic}. In the second stage subjects try to make sense of these images by elaborating them into iconic forms. In other words, the brain attempts to recognize construe the perceived images as culturally meaningful items (for
example a grid may represent a giraffe). The final stage marks the transition to fully iconic hallucinations, in which the images are often associated with culturally influenced items, memories or powerful emotional experiences.

Taking into account the aforesaid discussion on the relevance of ethnographic interpretation of rock art the vast wealth of Saura and Juang art is being discussed. Sauras and Juangs are two important colourful Tribes of Orissa, known for their paintings and engravings respectively. Notwithstanding the presence of 62 tribes in Orissa these two tribes were chosen for ethnographic study in view of their rich heritage in paintings and engravings, a phenomenon unique to the rock art of Orissa.  

For drawing the ethnographic analogy the following methodology was adopted, during the collection of data drawn from ten villages in each case.

(i) Individuals and village elders conversant with the community traditions and different aspects of art and religion were interviewed.

(ii) The artists who produced the art and the priests who were associated with consecrating or propitiating the art were interviewed.

(iii) In case of Saura the heads of the household who regularly gets the paintings drawn in their respective houses were interviewed.

(iv) The works of art were photographed along with their artists.


(vi) The comparative study reveals that the beliefs, myths and the rituals associated with the entire process of production of Saura paintings wherever it is practised have largely remained unchanged. During the last 50 years since Elwin (1951, 1955) documented whatever little changes are noticed as a result of acculturation, or expansion of
modern education or use of synthetic colours procured from the local markets, have failed to distort the basic character and functional goal as the art is conceived from the socio-religious context of the community wherein art performs an important function in the Saura way of life unlike the modern society where art is either a leisure-time or a highly specialised activity; making it truly art for art sake. Because the art is inspired and directed by religion the creation of the paintings involves an elaborate activity, which is almost standardised and continued with a great respect and veneration. In contrast, Juang woodcarvings are decorative in nature and purpose. They do not have any direct religious ritual base. May be in earlier times the decorative elements had some socio-religious significance. They are more or less decorative with an impulse to adorn or beatify their houses, particularly the community hall which they call Mandaghar.

When the primitive mind fails to comprehend the cause of unnatural tragedies like earthquake, burnt of the lightning, killer epidemics, even attacks by tiger or other ferocious animals, attribute the cause to malevolent gods and spirits who need to be propitiated and appeased by drawing icons. The icons or the pictograms (Mahapatra 1991) also described as pictographs (Elwin, 1951) are conceived and created in three stages. In stage one the shaman identifies the spirit or the power that has caused the disease, or death or that needs to be propitiated for the welfare of the family-whose icon to be drawn.

In stage two the icon is drawn on the house wall either by the artist (Ittalmaran) or the Shaman (Kuranmaran) if he knows how to draw. And in stage three the icon is consecrated by the shaman through an elaborate ritual involving invocations to all gods & spirits of the Saura world and the particular spirit, in whose honour the icon is prepared, to come and occupy the house. All sorts of fruits, roots, grains, corns including wine were offered and finally either a goat of a fowl is sacrificed.
SAURA ICONS

When a member of the family falls ill or the family experiences or apprehends of any unusual happenings in the household the village shaman is invited to find out the cause of such suffering, i.e. which malevolent spirit that is causing the problem and desires to be propitiated. In order to identify the malevolent spirit the shaman rubs white rice (aura or unboiled rice) on a winnowing fan and simultaneously utters incantations until the spirit is searched out. When the spirit is identified the shaman informs the head of the household about the spirit and the icon to be drawn in honour of the spirit.

Then the head of the house contacts the picture-man or the ittalmaran for a date to draw the icon. Necessary arrangements are made. The day before the icon is drawn the designated house wall is given a red wash with the help of locally available haematite clay (geru) mixed with water by the housewife. If the artist does not belong to the same village he comes to the house the evening before he is to start the work. If the shaman and the householder are not clear in their dream about whose picture to be drawn, then the ittalmaran sleeps besides the wall, designated for painting, with a view to getting a dream. And usually in the next morning he knows exactly what he has to do. In the morning the artist and the other members of the family take their bath. The housewife in her empty stomach places the ritual rice, fruits, vermilion, lamp, ghee, incense sticks and a pot of wine next to the wall for painting. She also prepares a white paste made out of pulverized-powder of white rice mixed with water and hands over the white paste to the ittalmaran for drawing the icons.

The ittalmaran before drawing the icons invokes the blessings of important Gods and spirits, he then offers some wine on the earth and on the wall where the painting is proposed to be drawn and says, as documented by Elwin (1951)\textsuperscript{25} "I am an ignorant fellow : I know nothing : but I have been told to make you a house. If I make any mistake, do not punish me, for it will not be my fault". He himself takes some wine before settling down to the work. He uses a brush made of either bamboo split or a twig from khejur. He then concentrates in drawing the picture on the red canvas on the wall with white
pigments. He conceives the total layout of the painting. He visualises the entire composition in accordance with the occasion and decides the format suitable to the composition and wall space available. Since the central theme of most Saura icon is to make a house for the supernatural and ancestral spirits, it is represented by a square or a rectangle. Hence the artist begins by sketching the outline of the frame and then proceeds to fill it with human figures representing the spirits in honour of whom the icon is drawn.

In drawing a human figure he first makes an outline of the body, either with a single triangle or with two opposed triangles that meet tip to tip. He then fills the triangles with additional application of white pigments. Lines are then drawn at the bottom for legs & in the sides for hands. A dot is given at the top for the head. In drawing the animals he follows the similar technique. For an elephant he draws a rectangular or oval body then adds legs, tail, head and trunk. The space within is filled with white and finally the rider is drawn. A horse is made with two opposite triangles placed horizontally and then legs, tail, head and rider are drawn in sequence. Care is taken to indicate the diagnostic traits of the animals like deer’s horn, bull’s hump, monkey’s tail & boar’s snout.

After the painting is completed the Shaman is called who, through his incantations, invites the spirit in whose honour it is made to come and inspect it. The shaman goes in trance; the spirit comes upon him and utters its criticism through his lips. Often the spirit complains of not giving a comb that was so dear to him, or a bicycle that he was riding, or the dog he had petted when he was alive. The deficiencies are immediately compensated by the ittalmaran, thereby the composition gets overcrowded. After the picture is completed to the satisfaction of the spirit or God the elaborate ritual of consecrating the icon is performed by the shaman. Flowers, fruits, roots, rice, grain, corns, vermilion, incense sticks, ghee and wine previously arranged are offered. Finally a fowl or a goat depending on the financial ability of the person is sacrificed. The blood of the sacrificed animal is smeared on the painting. The shamam concludes the proceedings by suspending a new earthen pot from the roof against the picture. The pot contains a portion of the offerings like white rice, cooked food, bidi (country cigarette), coins, garlic, corn and grains. After the ritual is over the householder hosts a feast for his kith and kin with meat and wine. The
ittalmaran and the shaman break their fast by joining the feast. Sometimes the householder makes a token payment to the ittalmaran and the shaman, though it is not binding or fixed.

The ittal so drawn is regarded as a little temple within the house— the one-dimensional homes of the Dead, the heroes and the gods. Offerings are made before the pictures on every ceremonial occasion like the first eating ceremony (known as adurs of mango or kandula and the harvesting festivals. The icon is kept preserved and worshipped until it is repeated the next year. Since the paintings are repeated in the same wall and on the same space again and again one can observe the earlier paintings dimly behind the bright outlines of the latest paintings.

The icons include drawings of men, women, animals, birds, lizards, flowers, plants, heavenly bodies like sun, moon, stars; agricultural and hunting implements and weapons; means of transport like bicycle, jeep, train, aeroplane; household furniture like tables, chairs, cots etc. and other conceivable things the Sauras are exposed to. The popular motifs next to human figures are peacock, monkey, lizard, horse, elephant and dog. The implements widely depicted are sickle, bow & arrow, ploughshare, spear and gun. Banana plant laden with fruits is a popular motif. Trees laden with beehives are another popular motif.

Elwin categorized these icons into the following seven types
(i) Icons designed to promote or preserve the fertility of the crop.
(ii) Icons dedicated to avert disease
(iii) Icons made to assist easy childbirth.
(iv) Icons made in honour of tutelaries.
(v) Icons made in honour of the dead.
(vi) Icons made for those who have gone abroad—(the tea gardens of Assam).
(vii) Icons representing hills and shrines

Besides the above there are other situations when the icons are made. For example; (i) when some deities or spirits get tired while passing by the
village and want to halt cause illness to some one in the village and demand an icon for rest; (ii) when somebody does not offer tobacco to the forest deity (Benasum) while carrying on forest activities is inflicted with illness. For a cure an icon has to be drawn in honour of Benasum; (iii) when the son does not continue with the shamanistic tradition of the father, the spirit of the deceased father and of the deities become unhappy and inflict illness demanding icon for cure, (iv) when some deities or entities get tired of isolation or loneliness convey their desire for an icon in the dream of the householder. Noncompliance causes illness.. (v) when mother’s breast becomes dry and the child suffers, icon for Tutiyumsum (deity of mother’s breast & nipple) is drawn. The list is long.

Thus for any thing and everything the Sauras draw icons for their general well being and success in their struggle for survival. The life-style of the Sauras who live in close interaction with supernatural entities, is unique and different from the other primitive communities of the state. Art, prompted by sources of beliefs and myths, form a part and parcel of the Saura life in their struggle for existence. Elwin aptly remarked, “among the Hill Saoras there is no art that is not inspired and directed by religion…” He further states that in the pictographs one can see “in a remarkably vivid manner how cult and myth can move a people to some sort of artistic expression; here are the records of their dreams, their eschatological hopes and fears, the dramatization of their theological beliefs. And these things are set out in a style, which, however crude it may seem to the sophisticated eye, is to them a triumph of technical achievement, a support to tribal morale, a cause of pride and self-respect”.26.

The icons mostly include the deities and their associates and attributes. For example, the earth goddess is associated with hoe/plough share and earthworm. The fertility goddess is associated with a plantain tree laden with bananas or a woman with a pot on her head. The forest deity is associated with hunting &cutting, implements like bow and arrow, spear, axe, knife gun and dog along with game like deer, antler, boar etc.

Lizard is a pet of the underworld entities. The colourful peacock largely found in the surrounding is the guardian of the icon. The icons are mostly
symbolic and rarely abstract. They are made with a purpose rather than for display. They are for the eyes of the spirit, not of men. Hence, they are kept hidden behind pots and gourds, suspended from the roof right against the paintings. In fact, it is desirable that human beings do not look at them for there is always danger that a careless word or an unguarded giggle may offend the spirit. The women are not allowed to touch them during their menstrual period.

Besides paintings the Sauras also do a bit of carving and engraving of the village shrine and the image of the village deity *Saibosum* and other household objects and artefacts like the wooden measuring pot (*mani*), the liquor container (*danil*), ear rings (*jhumpi*), musical instruments like flute (*tiruduipet*), kendra (an musical instrument resembles a violin) (*ranai*), drum (*tudum*), etc hunting implements like bow (*yanga*), arrow (*aam*), axe (*angi*), catapult (*labbar*), sword (*kadip*), spear (*sella*), knife (*katru*), etc. Engraved decorations on artefacts may be considered as secular art.

However as a result of expansion of modern education, group activities of the Christian missionaries and close interaction with the adjoining Hindu communities this rich tradition of Saura art is on the verge of extinction. Those who have converted to Christianity have completely abandoned the tradition of wall painting as they no more live in the Saura world of primitive belief. The percentage of converts among the Sauras is now more than 20%. Non-convert, educated and affluent Sauras living in the plains have discarded making icons as superstitious and blind beliefs. In the village San Kujendri (in Gunpur tehsil of Rayagada district) with a settlement of more than 350 Saura houses the author could document paintings in only 12 houses. The author was disappointed not to find a single painting in Dambasara, another Saura village in the same locality. Even with the Hill Sauras the tradition of making icons is on the wane on account of the expensive ritual it involves which, a normal Saura subsisting on selling forest products & fire wood and working as agricultural labourer cannot afford, even though he continues to live in the Saura world of supernatural entities. In the village Rijingtal an important hill-settlement of the Sauras in Puttasingh area (in Gunpur tehsil of Koraput district)
wall paintings could be documented in seven houses in a settlement of 116 houses.  

Because of their proximity with the adjoining Hindu community, the Sauras, through the process of acculturation have started adopting some of the Hindu traits in the paintings and in their religious life. Symbolic representation of the Goddess Laxmi being represented by a Lotus in Saura icon is very interesting. Lord Jagannath, which is considered as the original deity of the Sauras is also found depicted in icons. Despite such elements of intrusion and in a stage of forest disappearance the Saura pictogram, wherever is practised still retains its originality because of its ritualistic functional character and not an art for art sake.

Other tribal communities like the Santals, the Bhuniyas, the Dongoria Kondhs, the Juangs following a tradition of paintings and carvings or engravings in their house walls and wooden posts and lintels and other artefacts, unlike the Saura pictograms, are decorative in nature and without any religious or ritual bias. It is an art for art sake. It is interesting to note that the Santals in one of their traditional songs of migration make reference to their beautifully painted houses, which they have left behind. "What exquisite paintings on those walls! It bleeds one's heart to remember them and to know that we had to leave them behind". This amply suggests that beautifying houses is a tradition the tribal communities have inherited from a remote past. In the following section the rich tradition of painting as well as engraving followed by the Juangs, another well known primitive community of the state is discussed.

**JUANG ART**

Juang is a primitive Kolarian tribe inhabiting mainly in the hills and valleys around Gonasika, the source of the river Baitarani in the Keonjhar district of Orissa. They speak a language of the Mundari group of the Austro-Asiatic language family, which does not have a script. They live in small groups in compact villages situated in different terraces of the hills of the Gandhamardan range. In the locality they are known as the "Thaniyas"
(original inhabitants). Another branch of the tribe living on the hills of Dhenkanal is known as Bhagudias (migrants). The villages are mostly uniclan in composition and hence each village is exogamous.

They are also known as pathasaara as they use only a small piece of cloth around their waist and keeping the upper parts of the body bare. Dalton & Elwin have recorded that the Juang women were dressed in leaf skirt and the upper half bedecked with a few necklaces made of beads of various stones. But now they clothe themselves with sarees and dhotis.

They subset on exclusive exploitation of the natural resources partly by shifting cultivation on the hill slopes and partly by hunting of animals, birds, reptiles and gathering of edible fruits, roots and leaves. They are omnivorous.

The village is very small with only 8 to 10 houses irregularly situated following the undulation of the surface. Mostly rectangular in shape the houses are made of wattle-and-daub with a thatched roof of the local grass. The wattle-and-daub walls are given thick clay plaster, and wash of ochre in the inner side. Inside the house there used to be a stone pounder for pounding grains. Often the inner house walls are painted with various animal and floral motifs painted in white. In a Juang village the centre of attraction is the Mandaghar. It is the largest hut in the village with walls made of wattle-and-daub in its three sides with an open front. The roof as usual is thatched with bamboo and local grasses. It is a dormitory where the unmarried boys (kangerkh) sleep. It is also known as the Darbar where the disputes of the village are settled by the elders.

The inner walls are often decorated with painting of floral plant on motifs. Musical instruments like changu, (a flat tambourine like drum of large size), mandal (drums), double drums, flutes etc. are hanged on the wall. In the centre of the dormitory fire is always kept burning throughout the day and night. In front of the Mandaghar there used to be a plain open space for dance, music and other community functions of the village. The village deity Gram Siri represented by a stone column along with a few other stones placed around the column is enshrined either inside the dormitory or in the open space in front of
the dormitory. The Mandaghar is the holy place for all activities of the community. It is the resolving place for the boys, a recreation hall for the youth, a rest house for the visitors and a court house for the elders for settling village and family disputes. In older days there used to be a separate dormitory for the unmarried girls (selanki) known as Dhangribasa. But now this structure does not exist. The unmarried girls now sleep with the widow and old ladies to get the lessons of the community life.29

Educationally the tribe is very backward compared to the other tribes like Oram, Santhals, Sauras, Mundas and Kharsas. The tribe could produce its first graduate in 1986, who is now a member of the Zilla Parishad representing the tribe in the district level. He is now facing a non-bailable warrant for allegedly threatening the officials of the Juang Development Agency at Gonasika for their apathy towards the Development works. The author could able to locate him in his hideout and he willing took him into a few Mandaghars and also gave him an account of the Juang traditional life.

Mandaghar is the club of activities of the community. They beautify this community house with paintings executed on the mud walls and with engravings and carvings on the doors, wooden pillars and lintels of the hall. During the time of Nuakhai (first eating ceremony of the new crop, mango, Mahua etc.) they clean their houses and the Mandaghara and decorate the Mandaghara with alpana designs. Inner mud wall is given a red wash of haematite geru and on the red surface pictures of floral and plant motifs are drawn along with geometric patterns and thumb and palm impressions in white pigments made of pulverised rice. Often this white rice liquid is artificially sprayed and smeared. This alpana art of the Juangs have greatly influenced the Hindus that is widely practised in every household, particularly during the month of Margasira, i.e. the harvesting season.

Besides painting the Juangs decorate their wooden doors in the houses, and the wooden pillars and lintels in the Mandaghara with a variety of carvings and engravings. With the help of a iron chisel and a wooden hammer they carve a host of patterns and motifs, like sun, moon, stars, fish, elephant, bull, deer, horse, peacock and floral motifs. In the Mandaghara the wooden pillars
are carved with geometric patterns, crisscross lines and oblique lines along with the figure of venues.

Venus is clearly identified by a pair of breasts and the genital organ carved prominently in the entrance pillar of the Mandaghara. While enquiring about the significance of the female figure all the youth and elders present frankly expressed their ignorance. These artistic temperaments of the community are also exhibited in a few of their artefacts like combs, tobacco-cases, wine containers and flutes. With a sharp iron arrow head they engrave various patterns and motifs on artifacts.30

Body decoration is another testimony of the artistic impulse of the Juangs. The female tattoo their face, chest, hands and legs. Usual motifs of some human forms and a variety of floral motifs are executed. They believe that such decoration of the body keeps it immune from external dangers. This tradition of tattooing one's body is widely practiced in tribal India, which in turn has also greatly influenced the Hindus of the adjoining areas.

Thus the tribal living in remote isolated areas being cut off from the mainstream of civilization practises a great deal of art as continuity of tradition. The purpose is both magical as practised by the Sauras as well as art of art sake, as practised by the Juangs. Elwin31 who made an extensive study on Saura icons remarked, "The art forms and probably so also the process of production and even the underlying ideas, have been inherited by the Sauras as the continuity of tradition." Whatever be the motivation behind the creation of rock art, the present discussion brings out certain ethnographic parallels with rock art in terms of colour composition and delineation of the subject matter. Further studies however, may offer us useful tools for decoding the non-thematic and non-figurative pictorial codes in rock art.
References:


28. Ibid, p. 64.


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